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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KUALA LUMPUR 000074

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SUBJECT: COUNTERTERRORISM: THIRD TRILATERAL STRATEGIC
DIALOGUE MEETING IN KUALA LUMPUR

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¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Japanese Embassy in Kuala Lumpur hosted the third local meeting of the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) January 28. The Japanese, Australian, and U.S. delegations reviewed their respective counterterrorism (CT) activities in Malaysia. Discussion focused on terrorist financing; assistance to the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA); border security; bio-terrorism and export controls; and counter-radicalization. The delegations agreed to form working groups to facilitate follow-up in the areas of border security and export controls. End Summary.

Terrorist Financing

¶2. (SBU) Australia noted developments, since an October meeting in Sydney on terrorist financing, focusing on plans to conduct regional training on bulk cash smuggling April 21-24 at the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation. The AUSDEL wished to bring ten instructors from Australia, the U.S. and possibly Japan to train Malaysian, Indonesian, Philippines and Thai personnel. The USDEL expressed interest in conducting cash courier training at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

MMEA

¶3. (SBU) Japan provided a summary report on the MMEA, developed by a Japanese Coast Guard officer embedded with the MMEA (the substance of the report will be reported septel). Japan also distributed its January 25 announcement of an approximately USD 4.4 M grant to upgrade the MMEA's sea surveillance equipment. (Comment: While the system has application in both the tri-border region of Sabah as well as the Straits of Malacca, the latter shipping corridor is clearly the focus of Japanese regional strategic interests.) Japan solicited input on U.S. and Australian assistance to the MMEA to include in its report. The USDEL characterized its Title 1206 and 1207 programs, with their emphasis on domain awareness, information fusion, and maritime law enforcement in the tri-border region.

Border Security

¶4. (SBU) The USDEL outlined a planned five-day training program for border operations officers to be conducted with the Southeast Asia Regional Center on Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT). The program focuses on passenger assessment, fraudulent document identification, and interviewing techniques. The USDEL invited Australia and Japan to contribute subject matter experts to the effort. Australia noted a related APEC initiative in place between Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. to detect lost, stolen and counterfeit passports. Australia encouraged Japan to consider adopting this Regional Movement Alert System.

Bio-terrorism and Export Controls

¶5. (SBU) The AUSDEL reiterated the wish to make a joint approach to SEARCCT requesting it co-host a workshop on countering bio-terrorism prior to the conclusion of the Australian fiscal year in June. The AUSDEL acknowledged existing U.S. support for making the approach together, but noting that the planning window was closing, added that Australia would be willing make the approach alone were unanimity on the question not established soon. The JADEL said it would need to consult again with Tokyo.

Working Groups and Counter-radicalization

¶6. (SBU) The USDEL requested that working groups be formed to facilitate ongoing work in the areas of border security and export controls. Participants also agreed to meet and share information regarding assistance to the MMEA. The AUSDEL mentioned that the High Commission was also working cautiously to develop counter-radicalization programs, citing Malaysian reluctance to follow up on a suggestion by the GOM itself to explore the role of the media in CT. The USDEL mentioned two of Embassy KL's programs: one to televise in Malaysia information about Muslim families in the U.S. and the other a DRL grant to The Asia Foundation to explore the intersection of Islam and democracy in Malaysian society.

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Comment

¶7. (SBU) We hope that with the establishment of the two working groups and meetings to coordinate assistance to the MMEA, the trilateral format will begin to yield more practical benefits for our objectives in Malaysia.

KEITH